



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH  
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August 4, 2014

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.  
Director

SUBJECT: **NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO ENTER INTO SOLE SOURCE  
CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH SAN FERNANDO VALLEY  
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH CENTER, INC.**

This memo is to comply with the Board of Supervisors Policy Manual, Section 5.100 Sole Source Contracts. It is the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's (DMH) intent to enter into sole source contract agreement with San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Center, Inc. (SFVCMHC) to implement the Third District Diversion Program (TDDP). This program will provide housing and integrated services to homeless individuals with co-occurring mental health, substance abuse, and physical health disorders charged with misdemeanors and/or low-level felonies in the Van Nuys and San Fernando Courts as an alternative to incarceration.

The cost to provide mental health treatment, as well as custodial care, to a daily census of over 3,500 inmates with mental illness in Los Angeles County jails is substantial. Defendants who are mentally ill and unable to afford bail have been found to spend longer times in custody than those that are not suffering from mental illness. Court cases for persons with mental illness often take multiple court appearances to adjudicate, adding costs to the judicial system. The human cost is also significant. Incarceration disrupts treatment in the community, may result in the exacerbation of symptoms, contributes to or perpetuates homelessness and impedes recovery. Research indicates diversion programs produce positive outcomes for persons with mental illness and for the community.

DMH is a participant in a variety of collaborative criminal justice jail diversion projects including law enforcement/mental health crisis intervention teams, the Mental Health Court Linkage Program (MHCLP) and most recently the Assembly Bill (AB) 109 Realignment Program. DMH has also collaborated with the Third Supervisorial District to develop and implement creative and innovative programs that address homelessness, including the successful Project 50, and various Project 50 replications that provide housing; integrated health, mental health, substance abuse treatment, and benefits establishment for vulnerable, chronically homeless individuals living on the streets of Skid Row and other areas of the County. DMH proposes to enhance these

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partnerships through the implementation of the TDDP to provide housing and community-based services and supports for 50 homeless individuals annually, including capacity to serve 20 veterans, who are referred by the MHCLP from the Van Nuys and San Fernando Courts located in Service Area 2, and whose needs would be better served by housing and integrated services for the treatment of co-occurring disorders than by incarceration.

SFVCMHC is a contracted provider with DMH, the Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Veterans Administration (VA), experienced in collaborating with the MHCLP to accept referrals from the Van Nuys and San Fernando Courts for jail diversion. SFVCMHC has over four decades of experience providing mental health services to residents in the San Fernando Valley and a long history of providing a full range of recovery-based mental health and substance abuse treatment services for the mentally ill homeless population, most notably as a successful partner in the Project 50 replication programs since 2010. Agency services include assertive outreach and engagement, Full Service Partnership programs, individual and group treatment, medication support, crisis intervention, case management, benefits establishment, and employment services. Due to its experience with housing chronically homeless individuals with mental illness, working with DPH and VA to deliver integrated services and collaborating with the Courts for pre-sentencing diversion, SFVCMHC is uniquely qualified among potential Service Area 2 DMH contractors to provide a diversion program for the TDDP's target population.

Unless otherwise instructed by your Board within two weeks, DMH will proceed with extending sole source contract agreement. DMH will work closely with the Office of County Counsel in preparing an amendment with SFVCMHC.

MJS:RK:MM:LQ:lq

c:     Mental Health Deputies  
          Chief Executive Officer  
          County Counsel